

Communicating with Policymakers

1. Know who your board members, commissioners, city council, and legislators are. Know all of their contact information.
2. More importantly, make sure they know who you are and who you represent!
 - Initiate contact, if necessary.
 - Invite them for a tour of your facility and use the opportunity to educate them.
 - Make sure they have all of your contact information, including your cell number if you are comfortable providing that to them.
3. Research where your audience stands on the issues, what they need from you to help you, and who else influences them.
4. Know your story!! Have a canned speech or hand out that discusses your achievements and challenges.
5. A picture is worth a thousand words – use graphs, charts, and photographs.
6. Provide data to the policy maker which they can use to make your case for you.
7. There is strength in numbers!!!
8. You won't win every battle, so pick your battles carefully.
9. Always be respectful, even if you aren't treated respectfully.
10. If you don't have the answer to a question, tell them you'll get back to them with the answer...this allows for a continuation of dialogue.
11. Follow up!!